

PSALM 132: PURSUING THE LORD'S PRESENCE

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PSALM 132: THE VOW THAT CHANGED HISTORY

I. THE LORD CHOSE JERUSALEM AS THE PLACE FOR HIS TEMPLE

- A. After David conquered and secured Jerusalem, his first act as recorded in the Scripture was epic—he brought the ark to Jerusalem. David organized a national gathering that included 30,000 leaders to bring the ark to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:1-2).
David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him...to bring up from there the ark of God... (2 Samuel 6:1-2)
- B. David sought to bring the ark to its rightful place of honor in the center of Israel's life in Jerusalem. The first thing David did after he put the ark in Jerusalem was put singers and musicians in place.
- C. I believe that from his youth David understood that Jerusalem was the city chosen by God. He grew up in Bethlehem, only about five miles south of Jerusalem. After David killed Goliath in the valley of Élan, he cut Goliath's head off and walked about 10 miles to place his head in Jerusalem.
- D. As a young man, David vowed to dedicate his life to finding a “dwelling place” for God. David's vow included establishing a building for the ark to be placed and for God's power and presence to be manifested. The ark was associated with the release of God's power and presence.
LORD, remember David and all his afflictions; How he...vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob: Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, or go up to the comfort of my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes...Until I find a place [a temple to house the ark] for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.”
Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah [Bethlehem]; we found it in the fields [Kirjath Jearim]... Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place... (Psalm 132:1-8)
- E. A “resting place” (v. 8, 14)—or a “dwelling place” (v. 5, 13)—for God speak of the same reality. In principle, it can refer to places where the fullness of God's purpose for a specific time is released.
- F. Ephrathah: Ephrathah and Bethlehem are the same place (Ruth 1:2; 4:11; 1 Sam. 17:12; Mic. 5:2) David grew up in Ephrathah hearing “revival stories” of God's power associated with the ark (v. 6) It marked him in his youth.
- G. “*Found it in the fields*”: The ark sat in the forest village of Kirjath Jearim (lit. *the fields of the forests*), where it lay neglected for about 70 years. Bethlehem was 10 miles from Kirjath Jearim.
- H. “*Jacob*”: Jacob experienced an open heaven (Genesis 28) and wrestled with an angel for the full breakthrough of blessing (Genesis 32). The “*God of Jacob*” (v. 1, 5) speaks of the God of the open heaven and the God who gives more when His people wrestle with Him for it.
- I. “*Until*”: The “*until*” in verse 5 is similar to the “*until*” in Isaiah 62:7, when intercessors cry out “*until*” Jesus establishes His throne (dwelling place) in Jerusalem making it a praise in the earth (Jeremiah 3:17).
On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest for yourselves; and give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. (Isaiah 62:6-7 NAS)
- J. God's habitation, or resting place, is in His people (Ephesians 2:22). The Spirit strives with those who resist His leadership, to convince them to obey (Genesis 6:3). Thus, a “resting place” in principle may be a place where the Spirit “rests” in the midst of His people who live in agreement with His will. It is a place where God's purpose is done to the fullest measure ordained by God in that season.
The LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever...” (Genesis 6:3)
- K. The great revivals throughout history can often be traced back to various groups in a nation that seek to live as a holy, praying community seeking “revival” or as a glorious dwelling place of God.
- L. David served the fullness of God's purpose doing all His will in his generation (Acts 13:36). David's lifework was to establish a dwelling place for God in his generation. He prayed for Jerusalem to be a city where God's purpose would be released to the full measure ordained by God.

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For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep [died]..." (Acts 13:36)

- M. Find out what God is doing in your generation and then fully throw yourself into it. Determine to be a part of a community of radical believers who will not stop until the fullness of God's purpose is released. Be a revivalist and/or part of a "revival company" that is fully dedicated to Jesus.
- N. All over the earth in this hour, the Lord is raising up groups to live before Him in a way so to be used as catalysts to inspire others to love, obey, and seek God with all their heart. Never believe your group is the only one that is dedicated. The Lord told Elijah that there were 7,000 faithful ones (1 Kings. 19:18). I am sure there are many more than 7,000 communities of radical believers on earth.

II. DAVID'S SACRED VOW (Psalm 132:1-6)

- A. The psalmist knew that God was moved by David's commitment so he prayed that God would remember it. We are called to remember God's promises, but here God is called to remember a man's dedication—remember the vow David made, how he pressed in to You, O God!
LORD, remember David and all his afflictions; How he...vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob: "Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, or go up to the comfort of my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes... Until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob." Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah [Bethlehem]... (Psalm 132:1-6)
- B. Vow: David's vow is expressed in verses 3-5. Believers throughout history have embraced the spirit of this vow. A vow to be wholehearted in seeking for the fullness of God's purpose—this vow is at the heart of the end-time revival as well as the missions and prayer movement.
- C. Afflictions: The vow that David made was costly and caused him pressure and persecution. This prayer is that God would remember the resistance, difficulty, and reproach that David endured.
- D. David's house, bed, and sleep: David had a higher priority than building his own house—his own comfort, family, ministry, calling, and finances. David's house spoke of his domestic life and personal resources. His bed spoke of his personal comfort. Not giving sleep to his eyes spoke of pouring out his strength sometimes for long hours contending to see God's will fully done.

III. THE SPIRIT OF DAVID'S VOW (Psalm 69)

- A. David's vow was not recorded in Scripture, but it was well known to those who knew him. In Psalm 69:7-12 we gain insight into his vow. David described there the afflictions that he endured from his youth related to his zeal for God's house—and his lifestyle because of it.
For Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting that became my reproach... I became a byword to them. Those who sit in the gate speak against me...I am the song of the drunkards. (Psalm 69:7-12)
 - 1. Reproach: David bore reproach because of his zeal for God (v. 7, 9, 10). Many believers draw back because of the fear of man as they cannot bear the reproach.
 - 2. Shame: The shame of past failure and weakness did not stop David (v. 5-6).
 - 3. Stranger: David's seven older brothers treated David like a stranger, as if he were not in their family because of what he believed (1 Sam. 16:10). They rejected and accused him of being filled with pride and delusion because he was so zealous for God (1 Samuel 17:28).
 - 4. Zeal: David bore reproach because of his zeal for God's house or temple (v. 9). They mocked David because he had a vision to see a breakthrough in his day. We must zealously stand for what God is zealous for in this generation.
 - 5. Fasting: David was mocked for fasting that God's house would one day be filled with glory (v. 10). His brothers laughed at his vision and lifestyle.
 - 6. Byword: David became a byword to his family and friends (v. 11). They told jokes about him because of the intensity with which he sought God.
 - 7. Sit in the gate: The spiritual and political leaders in his community spoke against him.
 - 8. Drunkards: In the taverns, the drunkards mocked him with songs about his zeal for God.

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- B. There are various reasons why sincere believers draw back from seeking God with zeal.
1. Fear of criticism from others in the body of Christ steals much from some who sincerely want to press into God. They give up their vision because of wanting people to like them.
 2. Some draw back because of the love of comfort—they want things to be easier.
 3. Some draw back because they are fixated on their ministry growing—it takes too much time away from ministry networking, and increasing their ministry profile.
 4. Some draw back because they want more money—seeking God diligently takes much time. The time and decisions involved in going hard for God sometimes affects our finances.

IV. A TWOFOLD BREAKTHROUGH

- A. It is important to understand what Scripture teaches about “breakthrough”—it describes a twofold breakthrough. Jesus accomplished a full breakthrough for us in the spirit realm, and we partner with Him for a breakthrough of the fullness of His purpose in the natural realm.
- B. Paul’s declaration that we are a new creation in Christ has vast implications (2 Corinthians 5:17). We receive the very righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). All things pertaining to our born-again spirit have been made new. We are freely accepted by God, have authority in Jesus’ name, and have the indwelling Spirit so that we may effectively resist sin, sickness, and Satan.
If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away...all things have become new...21that we [our spirit] might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)
- C. We have confidence in the breakthrough that fully occurred in the spirit because of Jesus’ death. We contend for breakthrough in the natural so that God’s purpose will be fully released on earth. That is, we have confidence in what Jesus did, so we contend that it be openly manifested on earth.
1. The breakthrough in the spirit is seen by believers with eyes of faith.
 2. The breakthrough in the natural can be seen by unbelievers with natural eyes.
- D. God offers greater measures of grace for those who humbly seek for it with all of their heart. We do not earn a greater measure of grace, but position ourselves to freely experience more of it.
He gives a greater grace...God...gives grace to the humble... (James 4:6 NAS)
With great power the apostles gave witness...and great grace was upon them... (Acts 4:33)
Grace...be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God...grow in grace... (2 Peter 3:2, 18)
- E. Some confuse these two dimensions of breakthrough and thus are content with far less than what Jesus made available. They are content with Jesus’ breakthrough in the spirit regardless of the measure they experience in the natural. Set your heart to contend for the fullness of all that God has ordained for your generation—always seek a double portion of what you currently walk in.
- F. Some reduce their definition of revival so that it makes no demands on their life. Do not dumb down your vision for a full breakthrough of revival. Do not be comforted by the religious rhetoric that claims you are now walking in the fullness of all that has been made available.
- G. David’s heart was gripped with something bigger than his personal comfort and promotion. There is something bigger than our music or preaching ministry, or marketplace assignment, etc.
- H. God told Solomon that his father David “did well” in seeking to build His house (Matthew 25:21). It was in David’s heart to build a temple in Jerusalem to house the ark of the covenant. God was moved by the fact that David was so moved to do this. David wanted more than a tent for the ark. But the Lord told David no, because building the temple was ordained for Solomon’s day.
The LORD said to my [Solomon] father David, “Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well in that it was in your heart.” (2 Chronicles 6:8)